

Shaping Passenger Conduct in Public Transport Environments

Online seminar, Wednesday, 16 November

12:00–15:00 (CET)/13:00–16:00 (EET)

Organised by Christoph Schimkowsky (University of Sheffield/Åbo Akademi University) and Silja Laine (University of Turku/ Åbo Akademi University)

Seminar Outline

The behaviour of public transport users can sometimes become problematic or be perceived as such. Passengers skip queues, block seats on crowded trains, and listen to loud music, making public transport environments a principal location in which urban dwellers encounter 'rude strangers' in their everyday lives (Smith, Phillips and King 2010). As public transport users – highly diverse individuals with divergent mobility goals – are 'stuck' with each other for the duration of their journeys, such lack of adherence to codes of commuter conduct can cause discomfort and annoyance to fellow passengers (Jain 2011; Watts 2008), potentially discouraging public transport usage (Stradling et al. 2007). Furthermore, passengers blocking doors, navigating stations while intoxicated, or evading fares can affect the efficiency, safety, and profitability of transport operations.

Aware of these potential repercussions, public transport providers and associated actors employ a range of media technologies to tackle passenger behaviours they perceive as problematic, inappropriate, or otherwise undesirable. For example, transport companies employ posters, notices, signs, and announcements to convey the behavioural expectations and rules which (supposedly) govern conduct in spaces of urban mass transit. In addition to this, public transport environments are frequently the stage for public communication initiatives by civil society actors aiming to influence broader aspects of citizen attitudes and conduct (e.g. through public health and anti-discrimination campaigns). Despite the prevalence of semiotic interventions in everyday conduct in urban public transport environments globally, they are rarely the focus of dedicated scholarly inquiries (but see Moore 2011; Padoan 2014; Rink 2022; Schimkowsky 2021; Ureta 2012). This seminar seeks to address this oversight by bringing together researchers from across the social sciences and humanities who study endeavours to shape passenger conduct in diverse public transport environments.

References

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- Padoan, T. (2014) 'Drawn by images: control, subversion and contamination in the visual discourse of Tokyo Metro', *Lexia: Journal of Semiotics*, 17–18, pp. 579–599.
- Rink, B. (2022) 'Public space on the move: Mediating mobility, stillness and encounter on a Cape Town bus', *Urban Studies*.
- Schimkowsky, C. (2021) 'Managing passenger etiquette in Tokyo: between social control and customer service', *Mobilities*. doi:10.1080/17513758.2021.2000000
- Schimkowsky, C. (2022) 'Visual communication and the management of passenger conduct: a visual analysis of transit etiquette posters by Japanese railway companies', *Visual Communication*.
- Smith, P., Phillips, T. L. and King, R. D. (2010) *Incivility: the rude stranger in everyday life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
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- Watts, L. (2008) 'The art and craft of train travel', *Social & Cultural Geography*, 9(6), pp. 711–726.

Programme Outline

Times in CET EET: add +01:00	
12:00 – 12:10	Opening remarks <i>Christoph Schimkowsky, University of Sheffield</i>
Session I	
12:10 – 12:30	Learning how to smile: passenger behaviour and public transport in 1952 Summer Olympics in Helsinki <i>Silja Laine, University of Turku</i>
12:30 – 12:50	Educating the 'smart' passenger: Shaping behaviour on Cape Town's MyCiti bus <i>Bradley Rink, University of the Western Cape</i>
12:50 – 13:10	Kochi metrorail: A disciplining and ordering tool <i>Sreelakshmi Ramachandran, Concordia University</i> <i>Yogi Joseph, Concordia University</i>
13:10 – 13:30	The influence of vehicle layout on passenger behaviour and rail operations <i>Bernhard Rüger, Vienna University of Technology</i>
13:30 – 13:40	Break
Session II	
13:40 – 14:00	Modelling "good behavior" on fare-free public transport in Luxembourg <i>Sonja Faaren Ruud, Geneva Graduate Institute</i>
14:00 – 14:20	Shaping passengers' conduct through anti-fare evasion campaigns on Brussels public transport <i>Carine Assaf, KU Leuven</i> <i>Louise Sträuli, Tallinn University and Université Libre de Bruxelles</i>
14:20 – 14:40	Beyond fare evasion: The everyday moralities of non-payment and underpayment on public transport <i>Daniel Muñoz, University of Oxford</i> <i>Anna Plyushteva, University of Oxford</i>
14:40 – 15:00	"Ladies will kindly refrain from using abusive language": Female Passengers on-board Public Transit in Ottawa, Ontario <i>Emily Gann, Canada's Museums of Science & Innovation</i>
15:00	Closing remarks & end of event

Joining Instructions (Zoom)

Time: 16 Nov 2022, 12:00-15:00 (CET)/13:00-16:00 (EET)

Link: <https://aboakademi.zoom.us/j/62354398867?pwd=ZHRLRHVQeUJYdkhXK29DazhDcEU2UT09>

Meeting ID: 623 5439 8867

Passcode: 404698

The seminar is open to all. There is no registration fee.

Please contact Chris Schimkowsky (ch.schimk@gmail.com) in case of any questions.

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